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# **The Evaluation of the Performance of Primary and Secondary school managers using the EFQM Model: A case from Iran**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to evaluate the performance of primary and secondary headmasters using the EFQM organizational excellence model in Andimeshk. This was a descriptive survey. The statistical population consisted of 2000 teachers of primary and secondary school of the first and second year in Andimeshk. According to Morgan table, 322 people were selected using stratified random sampling technique and gender. The data collection includes a questionnaire used derived from business excellence model with 4 criteria (leadership, strategy, resources, partners and employees outcomes). To assess the validity, two kinds of content and construct validity were used. The validity of the scale of the evaluation of headmasters' performance was confirmed according to the business excellence model using confirmatory factor analysis with LISREL software. Reliability of the tool was obtained 0/90 using Cronbach test. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics were used and in regard with inferential statistics, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Friedman's rank, one-sample t-test and chi-square goodness of fit test. Statistical results showed that from the perspective of teachers, the performance of primary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk was in an acceptable level with regard to leadership, strategy, resources and partners and society.

**Keywords:** performance evaluation; headmasters; primary and secondary schools; business excellence model

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

We live in a very complicated world consisting of two major features, limited resources and unlimited needs. This factor has led to widespread interest in productivity. Productivity or improvement in the performance of organizations can support the growth and development program and create opportunities for organizational excellence. Without awareness of the progress and achievement of objectives and identifying the challenges facing the organization, obtaining feedback and information from the policy set and identifying issues that need serious improvement in performance of the organization, the organization will not be improved. In this regard, models of organizational excellence have had remarkable success as a powerful tool in responding to the needs of organizations and have been largely used for pathology of the organization and determination of the path to access the human resources

excellence. Using this model, the success of the organization can be evaluated at various points in regard with the performance of improvement programs in addition to the fact that the performance of the organization can be compared with that of other organizations especially the best ones (Miklaei, 2010). As we see, in today's dynamic world, comprehensive and borderless range of science and technology has made permanent and more sophisticated tools and techniques so that if the people are not taught as part of human society permanently; and if their knowledge does not keep pace with changes in the environment, they will even face problems in meeting their own needs. It shows the importance and place of education in human life. Ministry of Education is a public entity which, due to its important role in meeting the needs of the people, its approach to science and popular culture should be considered in order to know the strengths and weaknesses and gaps between the current and desired status; and accordingly, we are able to overcome the weakness and improve the performance (Shekari, 2003). According to Fars News (2004), educational systems play a key role in flourishing the society as the most significant investment of human resources. Performance of headmasters is the most important component of these systems; and if it is necessary to make changes in education, management should be the starting point. Basically, performance evaluation and review of plans and strategies are effective management requirements. Achievement and improvement of purposes is not possible without assessment and review. The headmasters cannot apply their effective management on the process regardless of the facts and the results. Available evidence suggests that today organizations and institutions are grappling with numerous problems which cause to reduce the efficiency and effectiveness and therefore, proficiency of the organization (Ehsani Frad, 2010). Obviously, employees of ministry of education including headmasters and teachers should have the competence, knowledge and awareness in order to better meet the goals of education and improve their productivity. Accordingly, considering the growth of the student population and coercion to use headmasters and teachers with no experience, conditions and real preparations, especially in the primary school, have essential and vital importance to resolve problems and improve it (Niknami, 1998). One of the most important and fundamental questions in evaluating the performance of organizations is: What is the function and performance of organizations?

In this regard, it appears that by discussing the principles of quality in this sector, we can improve services and provide client satisfaction. But to evaluate the performance, there are various reasons.

Paarker expressed the reasons of evaluation of performance as follows:

1. Evaluation of performance indicates where the problem is and where needs to be improved.
2. Evaluation of performance can help the organization identify its process and find what it knows and what it does not know.
3. Evaluation of performance makes sure that decision is made based on reality not assumption and guess (Parker, 2000, quoted by Miklaei, 2010).

Models of organizational excellence have had remarkable success as a powerful tool in responding to the needs of organizations. They are designed in such a way that can be used as useful tools for competition as well as pathology and organizational development programs. Organizational excellence model is a new model used to evaluate the performance which evaluates the organization more comprehensively than traditional method. One of the top models is the use of a powerful tool for rating the organizations which is called RADAR

logic. In the meantime, several studies have been conducted on evaluating the performance of employees in organizations. Maleki (2010), in the study on evaluating the performance of management education on the EFQM excellence model in Miyandoab, showed that the performance of headmasters of ministry of education in Miyandoab based on the EFQM excellence model is better in regard with results than empowerment. Shahroudi (2011), in the study entitled the evaluation of the performance of companies, using the criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model test showed that the results confirmed all the hypotheses. The correlation coefficient was obtained 0/874 for strategy, 0/852 for employees, partners and resources, 0/943 for employees' outcomes and 0/883 for society. Younesi (2013), in the study on the evaluation of the performance of the Shahid Sadoughi hospital based on the EFQM excellence model, concluded that Shahid Ghodousi hospital received 185/41 points of 500 points considered in the EFQM model. These points suggest that the hospital is far from an ideal situation defined. Considering the performance of the hospital in moderate to low level, it is necessary to pay more attention to management. So it is necessary to develop an effective and efficient program to improve the Performance of the hospital. Also, Review of published research provides a useful framework for understanding the application and the importance of the evaluation of the performance of the employees in educational and non-educational institutions. Jose tari (2007), in the study entitled self-assessment of the European organizational excellence models, using a questionnaire approach to educational services in Spain showed that this model can strengthen the strategy of university by identifying the strengths and weaknesses in higher education institutions and can evaluate the performance of the university systematically and completely and cause to improve the quality of universities. Ballbstre (2011), in the study entitled strategy formation process of the EFQM model, introduced critical review and new perspectives. The adoption of a comprehensive strategy process is a way to create a strategic capability which helps create positive results and sustainable competitive advantages. In today's environment, many companies use EFQM Excellence Model to create such capabilities. On the other hand, Dodangeh and colleague (2011) in the study entitled fuzzy design stated that EFQM is widely used in Europe and worldwide; and it has become the base for most national and regional award. This is a special tool which can identify areas on the verge of development as a guide. However, Today EFQM model has some problems and predicaments unable to parameters in the area. According to the researchers' findings, organizational excellence model is very useful as a framework for performance evaluation and measurement of the success of organizations in implementing the new management and total quality management. In fact, these models are used as a common language to compare the performance and the success of the organization; taking into consideration careful and painstaking criteria and principles, these models can be the basis for numerous design awards. (Khayatan Yazdi, 2005). Previous studies showed that yet, in order to evaluate the performance, new models have not been used to evaluate the performance of headmasters in Andimeshk. On the other hand, previous assessment could not show completely enough strengths and weaknesses of the organization and make clear both current and optimal situations in different areas and improve the situation far more efficient. Therefore, in this study, we are going to evaluate the performance of primary and secondary headmasters using the EFQM organizational excellence model in Andimeshk.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In regard with the objective, this is an applied research and regarding methodology this is a descriptive-survey research. The statistical population consists of 2000 teachers of primary and secondary school, of the first and second year, in Andimeshk. According to Morgan table, 322 people were selected using stratified random sampling technique and gender. For data collection, the questionnaire was used originally approved by the European Foundation for Quality Management and presented as organizational excellence model. Since the questionnaire should be modified according to the requirements of each organization and 9 main criteria listed in organizational excellence model, due to the nature of education, Persian version of the questionnaire were collected from EFQM Excellence Award, 2010 Edition (Najmi, 2010); and a total of 25 items was prepared in 4 standard so that 3 criteria (leadership, strategy and resource partners) was developed from enablers and 1 criterion from results factor (society) with 25-items of the questionnaire. To measure validity of the questionnaire, the relationship between the subscales and the total score of the questionnaire was used by Pearson correlation; total score of the questionnaire has significant relationship with leadership at  $r=0/835$ , with strategy at  $r=0/845$ , with resources and partners at  $r=0/783$  and society at  $r=0/836$  which are at a significant level of error  $0/05$ . In the present study, in order to determine the reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used with the EFQM organizational excellence model from the perspective of teachers equal to  $0/906$  for the questionnaire of evaluation of headmasters of ministry of education in Andimeshk; and because it was higher than  $0/7$ , therefore, we can continue the research with a larger sample of the population with the ideal results. In this study, in order to analyze the data, the descriptive methods such as frequency and percentage, histograms, mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics including chi-square goodness of fit test were used.

## 3. RESULTS

First question: how is the performance of headmasters of primary and secondary schools in Andimeshk in terms of leadership?

**Table 1.** Chi-square goodness of fit test and the observed and expected frequencies.

		Outstanding	expected frequencies	Observed frequency	sig	Degree of freedom	Chi-square test
from the perspective of teachers	Low	-77.7	106.7	29	0/001	2	105/86**
	middle						
	high	5.3	106.7	112			
	total	72.3	106.7	179			
				320			

As we can see in table1, chi square 105/86 and degree of freedom 2 and significant level 0/001 are lower than error level 0/05; therefore, we confirm the difference between the observed and expected frequencies and accept that the test is significant. Since the chi-square has the highest frequency (high with 179 people), so we conclude with 95% confidence that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk has high desirability in terms of leadership.

Second research question: how is the performance of headmasters of primary and secondary schools in Andimeshk in terms of strategy?

**Table 2.** Chi-square goodness of fit test test and the observed and expected frequencies.

		Outstanding	expected frequencies	Observed frequency	sig	Degree of freedom	Chi-square test
from the perspective of teachers	low	-40.7	106.7	66	0/010	2	24/45**
	middle						
	high	12.3	106.7	119			
	total	28.3	106.7	135			
				320			

As we can see in table2, chi square 24/45 and degree of freedom 2 and significant level 0/001 are lower than error level 0/05; therefore, we confirm the difference between the observed and expected frequencies and accept that the test is significant. Since the chi-square has the highest frequency (high with 135 people), so we conclude with 95% confidence that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, Performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk has high desirability in terms of strategy.

Third research question: how is the performance of headmasters of primary and secondary schools in Andimeshk in terms of resources and partners?

**Table 3.** Chi-square goodness of fit test test and the observed and expected frequencies.

		Outstanding	expected frequencies	Observed frequency	sig	Degree of freedom	Chi-square test
from the perspective of teachers	low	-19.7	106.7	87	0/039	2	6/49**
	middle						
	high	2.3	106.7	109			
	total	17.3	106.7	124			
				320			

As we can see in table3, chi square 6/49 and degree of freedom 2 and significant level 0/001 are lower than error level 0/05; therefore, we confirm the difference between the observed and expected frequencies and accept that the test is significant. Since the chi-square has the highest frequency (high with 124 people), so we conclude with 95% confidence that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, Performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk has high desirability in terms of resources and partners.

Fourth research question: how is the performance of headmasters of primary and secondary schools in Andimeshk in terms of society?

**Table 4.** Chi-square goodness of fit test test and the observed and expected frequencies.

		Outstanding	expected frequencies	Observed frequency	sig	Degree of freedom	Chi-square test
from the perspective of teachers	low	-83.7	106.7	23	0/039	2	104/28**
	middle						
	high	24.3	106.7	131			
	total	59.3	106.7	166			
				320			

As we can see in table4, chi square 104/28 and degree of freedom 2 and significant level 0/001 are lower than error level 0/05; therefore, we confirm the difference between the observed and expected frequencies and accept that the test is significant. Since the chi-square has the highest frequency (high with 166 people), so we conclude with 95% confidence that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk has high desirability in terms of society.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

According to the study on the performance of headmasters of ministry of education in Andimeshk in terms of leadership, the results showed that from the perspective of teachers of ministry of education in Andimeshk, the performance of headmasters of ministry of education in Andimeshk had high desirability in terms of leadership. According to the results of other studies on evaluating the performance of headmasters in terms of leadership, of 100 points dedicated to leadership process in the EFQM Model, in the study done by Maleki (2010), scores of leadership were equal to 61/03, being acceptable. Miklaei (2010) evaluated leadership and found it at a high level (with 85 points). Also, Parham (2013) in the same study showed that leadership had high desirability. The results of this study showed that performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk had high desirability in terms of leadership. Management is the most important factor in survival, growth and development or destruction of the organizations. Leadership is the most basic and key function of management. Headmaster is the one who leads the process of moving from the

"status quo" to the "ideal situation". We know that leadership is crucial to the performance of any organization. EFQM model also confirms this issue and says that school success is dependent on the kind of leadership committed to the implementation of the mission and the purposes of education and training; and it encourages empowerment and independence of teachers and is directly involved in them and makes them integrated and coordinated and supports the processes of change. Also, the results showed that school administrators manage extracurricular activities effectively and try to develop the activities of the Council and PTA (parents and teachers association). School administrators always welcome suggestions and innovative from teachers in order to improve quality of education; and they are constantly attempting to develop new teaching methods in schools; they always try to use teachers from other schools for the promotion of education and research activities. Also, they try to provide educational facilities in order to improve the quality. Analysis of factors influencing the growth and development of developed countries shows that all these countries have enjoyed the efficiency and effectiveness of education. Yet we know that headmasters play different roles different and varied in terms of time, place and type of work; and it has a considerable impact to identify these roles in improving the performance. In the meantime, education and training are key factors in the social and economical development of every society. Educational systems will not be able to meet the growing responsibilities of their own without effective leadership and management. The achievement of the purpose of education and training depends on effective leadership and management. Effective leadership and management of school depend on their control and evaluation activities; and it is here that the role of school administrators become very important and crucial; and their efficiency and effectiveness on the school is critical. On the other hand, the finding of the second research question about the performance of headmasters of primary and secondary schools in Andimeshk in terms of strategy showed that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk had high desirability in terms of strategy. . Younesi (2013), in the study on the evaluation of the performance of the Shahid Sadoughi hospital showed that strategy was in the desirable level; it was shown by the findings of the study done by Harat(2010) that strategy was in the desirable level with 90 points. On the other hand, in the study done by Morkani(2011) in the study on evaluation of the application of components of EFQM Excellence Model in universities, strategy was the first factor in a relatively good level (75/63%); the results of it was consistent with the present study. In the meantime, the second factor which draws attention to itself is policies and strategies observed in a high level of desirability. This means that cases such as projections and considering the needs and expectations of teachers, analysis of problems and situations facing schools, policies and strategies expressed in clear and measurable objectives And prospective planning are implemented by headmasters in schools. This situation shows the relative strengths of the planning system, policymaking and strict implementation of the objectives of education considered as opportunity for efficiency and effectiveness of performance and the success of the organization. Also, the results of this study showed that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, Performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk had high desirability in terms of strategy. This indicates that policy and strategy has been developed accurately based on the organizational excellence; there is a clear framework for identifying and implementing processes for the achievement of the strategy. The evaluation of strategy of headmasters using organizational excellence model showed that school administrators identified external resources (human and material) very well and communicates with them. There is always a mechanism in school to seek advice



from Teachers. Feedback from teachers and students are analyzed by school administrators. There is an appropriate mechanism for evaluating the quality of the performance of the teachers in school. However, there is an appropriate mechanism for training sessions for teachers. Also, information and communication technology (Internet and computer) is provided for teachers according their needs.

Analysis of the results of the third question about performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk in terms of resources and partners showed that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, Performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk had high desirability in terms of partners and resources. The results are very close to the results of the study done by Ghazvini(1994) on the evaluation of the Shahid Rajaei hospital. Younesi (2013) in the study on the evaluation of the performance of Shahid Sadoughi hospital showed partners and resources are in a desirable level. Miklaei(2013) estimated it in a high level (with 76 points) in the evaluation of leadership. Sadeghi(2011) confirmed that this factor with 69 points was in a desirable level; and it is consistent with the results of the present study. High points in terms of partners and resources can be considered as the factors associated with good management of financial resources, material and human in the school. School administrators have been able to take action to attract financial support well. Such actions in the field of financial resources included using donations, popular councils in schools, PTA, raising popular awareness of the role of education as the key to success in the various aspects of material and spiritual progress of society that this factor has led to the widespread presence of people in it. Also, in the explanation for this finding, it can be said that based on a systematic view, which optimal process of teachers' comments are desirable in the connection with the activities of headmasters in terms of leadership, strategy, partners and resources and outcomes. Therefore, in the carrying out the duties of their leadership, individual and organizational needs are considered in schools of Andimeshk. Suggestions and innovative of teachers are used to improve their teaching books. However, given that the directors of good strategy are employed to use teachers' comment, it can be said that Strategic management in primary and secondary schools is the reason for effective leadership. There is consistent between mission and strategy and management functions which are the main reasons for the in-service workshops, seminars, speeches, reduction of centralization and cooperative management. However, review of the mean of the teachers' responses shows that although school administrators have begun to move towards excellence approach, but we should try to develop excellence in management of education and training.

Analysis of the results of the fourth question about performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk in terms of society showed that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk had high desirability in terms of society. According to the results of other studies on evaluating the performance of headmasters in terms of society, of 90 points dedicated to society in the EFQM Model, in the study done by Harat (2010), scores of society were equal to 80, which was evaluated as acceptable. Miklaei (2010) evaluated society and found it a high level (with 85 points). Also, Eghbal(2009), in a similar study showed that society has high desirability; and the results of this study is consistent with the present study. Another interesting criterion is the outcomes of society. As it was observed, outcomes of society were evaluated as highly desirable. Since the results include outcomes of society, so it expresses gains from the implementation of appropriate criteria such as leadership, strategy, resource and partners. Therefore, the strength in this area can be known as related criteria taken by society such as the performance of headmasters. Practices

performed in the school will be under the supervision of school administrators; and administrators are responsible for implementation of training and administrative affairs in front of local department of education. The findings suggest that that from the perspective of primary and secondary school teachers in Andimeshk, Performance of elementary and secondary headmasters in Andimeshk has high desirability in terms of societies' outcomes. School administrators were active in progressive social and cultural activities. To develop students' educative skills, the project of headmasters' assistant are being performed in schools. Headmasters also try to achieve the goals of education in the region and the country.

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